

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. An electronic messaging system, comprising an access restriction filter
2 configured to interrogate an electronic message for an access restriction notice in
3 response to a user command to transmit the electronic message, and to respond to a
4 detected access restriction notice in accordance with a prescribed transmission policy.
- 1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 detect an ownership notice in the electronic message.
- 1 3. The system of claim 2, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 detect a copyright notice in the electronic message.
- 1 4. The system of claim 3, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 detect a copyright notice by comparing one or more characters in the electronic message
3 to one or more stored copyright notice representations.
- 1 5. The system of claim 3, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 detect a copyright notice by interrogating a header component of the electronic message.
- 1 6. The system of claim 1, further comprising a character recognizer
2 configured to translate characters in an image component of the electronic message into
3 computer-readable character representations.
- 1 7. The system of claim 6, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 detect an access restriction notice by comparing one or more translated computer-
3 readable character representations produced by the character recognizer to one or more
4 stored access restriction representations.
- 1 8. The system of claim 1, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 block transmission of the electronic message in response to a detected access restriction
3 notice.
- 1 9. The system of claim 8, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 enable a user to override a blocked electronic message transmission.
- 1 10. The system of claim 8, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 enable a system administrator to override a blocked electronic message transmission.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to trigger display of a report to a user in response to a detected access restriction notice.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to trigger display to a user a message reporting that the electronic message cannot be transmitted because of a detected access restriction.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to trigger display to a user a message reporting that a fee must be paid to enable transmission of the electronic message.

14. An electronic messaging method, comprising

interrogating an electronic message for an access restriction notice in response to a user command to transmit the electronic message, and

responding to a detected access restriction notice in accordance with a prescribed transmission policy.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein interrogating the electronic message comprises detecting an ownership notice in the electronic message.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein detecting an ownership notice in the electronic message comprises detecting a copyright notice in the electronic message.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein a copyright notice is detected by comparing one or more characters in the electronic message to one or more stored copyright notice representations.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein a copyright notice is detected by interrogating a header component of the electronic message.

19. The method of claim 14, further comprising translating characters in a still image component of the electronic message into computer-readable character representations.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein an access restriction notice is detected by comparing one or more translated computer-readable character representations to one or more stored access restriction representations.

21. The method of claim 14, further comprising translating characters in a video image component of the electronic message into computer-readable character representations.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein an access restriction notice is detected by comparing one or more translated computer-readable character representations to one or more stored access restriction representations.

23. The method of claim 14, wherein responding to a detected access restriction notice comprises blocking transmission of the electronic message in response to a detected access restriction notice.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein responding to a detected access restriction notice comprises enabling a user to override a blocked electronic message transmission.

25. The method of claim 23, wherein responding to a detected access restriction notice comprises enabling a system administrator to override a blocked electronic message transmission.

26. The method of claim 14, wherein responding to a detected access restriction notice comprises displaying a report to a user in response to a detected access restriction notice.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein responding to a detected access restriction notice comprises displaying to a user a message reporting that the electronic message cannot be transmitted because of a detected access restriction.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein responding to a detected access restriction notice comprises displaying to a user a message reporting that a fee must be paid to enable transmission of the electronic message.

29. A computer-readable medium comprising:
computer readable code, said code providing instructions for interrogating an electronic message for an access restriction notice in response to a user command to transmit the electronic message and for responding to a detected access restriction notice in accordance with a prescribed transmission policy.

1 30. The system of claim 1, wherein the access restriction filter is configured to
2 detect a “confidential” notice, an “internal use only” notice or an “attorney-client
3 privileged” or “attorney work product” notice.

[illegible]